

# Luke 18:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

## Analysis

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**I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess**—the Pharisee's resume of religious performance. Νῆστευō δις του σαββατου (νηστεύω δὶς τοῦ σαββάτου) means 'I fast twice per week'—Mondays and Thursdays, beyond the single required annual fast (Day of Atonement). Αποδεκατō παντα ήσα κτόμαι (ἀποδεκατῶ πάντα ὅσα κτῶμαι)—'I tithe all that I acquire,' even herbs and spices beyond the law's requirements (Matthew 23:23).

These works aren't inherently wrong—fasting and tithing are biblical. The problem is using them as grounds for self-justification. He trusts his performance, not God's mercy. Paul later confessed similar credentials (Philippians 3:4-6) but counted them as loss compared to knowing Christ. Religion without grace produces pride; grace produces humility.

## Historical Context

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Jewish law required one fast annually—Yom Kippur (Leviticus 16). Pharisees added voluntary fasts twice weekly as piety displays. Tithing was required on grain, wine, and oil (Deuteronomy 14:22-23), but Pharisees extended it to garden herbs like mint, dill, and cumin. These 'fence around the law' practices aimed to prevent accidentally breaking God's commands, but became badges of superiority rather than expressions of love for God.

## Related Passages

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**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## Study Questions

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1. What makes religious disciplines like fasting and tithing dangerous when used as grounds for self-righteousness?
2. How can you practice spiritual disciplines as responses to grace rather than attempts to earn God's favor?
3. What warning does this verse give about going 'beyond requirements' while missing the heart of true righteousness?

## Interlinear Text

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νηστεύω δὶς τοῦ σαββάτου ἀποδεκατῶ πάντα ὅσα  
I fast twice in the week I give tithes of all that  
G3522 G1364 G3588 G4521 G586 G3956 G3745

κτῶμαι

I possess

G2932

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 11:42** (Parallel theme): But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

**Matthew 9:14** (Parallel theme): Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

**Luke 17:10** (Parallel theme): So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

**Matthew 6:1** (Parallel theme): Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

**1 Timothy 4:8** (Parallel theme): For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

**Malachi 3:8** (Parallel theme): Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.

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